SERIES 5 • ISSUE 18 • MAY 4, 2015
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

COMMUNITY YARD SALE HAS A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING P7


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LOCAL VETERAN CHOSEN TO TAKE ROTARY HONOR FLIGHT TO WASHINGTON D.C.




SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Homer Parker is a World War II Veteran and was honorably discharged from the Army with a T5 rank.



Sharon Schuler Kreps
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HANCEVILLE – World War II Veteran and Victorian Manor resident Homer Parker received exciting news this past week. He has been chosen to participate in the Tuscaloosa Rotary Honor Flight on May 6. He and many other World War II and Korean War veterans will be flown to Washington D.C. to visit the National World War II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery. Mr. Parker has been on the waiting list for the flight since November P6

28TH ANNUAL CAR SHOW TO DELIGHT PONTIAC ENTHUSIASTS

Will Hogue
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CULLMAN – This Saturday, May 16, the Cullman chapter of the Pontiac-Oakland Club International will hold their 28th Annual car show. The event will be held at Sportsman Lake Park and, although it will feature the cars, there will be much more than just automotive attractions.

According to the POCI website, the purpose of the club is to "to pool together as much information as possible to assist Pontiac, Oakland and GMC P3

CRAFT EVENT BENEFITS HOSPICE

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CULLMAN – At Northbrook Baptist Church, on Saturday, May 9, the Share Club of Cullman will host CRAFTED Cullman. The event, which will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 12:30 p.m., will be an opportunity for those interested in crafts to learn new techniques and hear from guest speakers. P4

AMERICAN LEGION AND LADIES AUXILLARY REMEMBER VETERANS

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN – Every year, we remember our veterans who have given everything to protect our homeland and others throughout the world. The American Legion, along with the Ladies Auxiliary will be hosting Memorial Day Ceremonies at Sportman's Lake as well as a unique display on the fence at Veteran's Park.

"The American Legion and VFW have always alternated the Memorial Day Ceremony at Sportsman's Lake and this year the American Legion will be sponsoring the Memorial Day Ceremony at Sportsman's Lake," said Mary Reid of the Ladies Auxiliary. P2


MARY REID

Teresa Goodwin and Mary Reid begin placing poppies on the fence of Veteran's Park at Sportsman Lake in remembrance of soldiers lost.

UNITED WAY MEETS $400,000 FUNDRAISING GOAL

Mary Standifer
Contributor

CULLMAN – United Way of Cullman County has met its annual fundraising goal – a feat that has not been seen in at least six years. Executive Director Sammie Danford has been working for two years P4

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NEW STORM SHELTERS OPEN AT SPORTSMAN LAKE PARK

Hannah Ward
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CULLMAN – The new Cullman city storm shelters are officially open and ready to be utilized. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held to celebrate this great accomplishment. Located on Sportsman Lake Drive right across from the fairgrounds, these white buildings can comfortably accommodate 500 people. The residents of Cullman County can now rest a bit easier knowing there is a safe place to go to in the event of bad weather.

On April 27, 2011 some of the most catastrophic tornadoes that have ever hit the city of Cullman stormed through, leaving utter devastation in their wake.

Not only did people lose their property and businesses, but some lost their lives. The lack of protection from something like this was evident that the city needed to do something.

Cullman City Mayor Max A. Townson stated, "It took us awhile, from 2011 until today. We didn't give up. We're just glad to have them and hope we never have to use them." This can-do attitude is what really marks this project. The civil servants of Cullman County saw a need and did what needed to be done to bring a place of refuge to the people of Cullman.

This journey began with Police Chief Kenny Culpepper getting the ball rolling. Cherrie Haney of Cullman County Economic Development said, "Police Chief Culpepper was the one that contacted us and asked us to do this grant. He was instrumental in getting this done." But her office was responsible for acquiring the federal grant. She explained, "The state EMA office opened up the grant process, and we were able to apply for grants. We asked all the municipalities. We got it approved though the city council. It all has to do with the process."

Mayor Townson explained the work required to get us to this point, "It's been a process to get these storm shelters built because it was through a grant. Then we had to do some work to bring gas, electricity, water and sewer. So it's going to be very valuable if we ever have another severe tornado like we had. Let's hope that never happens again, but if it does the residents will have a place to come and feel very secure and very safe."

These shelters did not just happen, they were an arduous, four-year long process.

The utilization of these storm buildings in an emergency was carefully planned out. Cullman City Police Chief Kenny Culpepper explained, "When there's a tornado watch, we have two police officers who live on the north side of town. We also have a key that's at dispatch. So either an on-duty officer or off-duty officer."

The Chief also said the shelters will be staffed with a paramedic and a police officer. "Then people can come and utilize the shelter and it will be supervised and have medical care," Culpepper concluded.

The new shelters can accommodate 500 people and were funded through federal grants.



IMAGES BY NOAH CHANDLER/CULLMANSENSE

Community leaders and Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce members join Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson in officially opening the storm shelters.



NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY HELD AT ST. BERNARD PREP

Joyce Nix
St. Bernard Contributor

CULLMAN - Eighteen students were inducted into the National Honor Society recently at St. Bernard Preparatory School in Cullman, AL. Honor Society advisor, Mr. David Hays welcomed all parents, students and faculty in attendance and congratulated each student for their achievements.

Following the welcome, Nick Schweers opened the ceremony with a prayer before turning the program over to Aimme Cortes, President of the National Honor Society program at St. Bernard.

Cortes explained the criteria to being inducted into National Honor Society. "To become a member of Honor Society one must have completed one semester as a junior or senior at St. Bernard Prep, must maintain a grade average of 90 or higher in math, science and foreign language; exhibit leadership, service and character, and participate in meeting and chapter projects."

Students recognized the four qualities exemplified in NHS—Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character—with the lighting of candles. Shivangi Patel spoke on scholarship—the commitment to learning; Megan Butler spoke on service—establishing a routine to work for those in need; Candace Rosenhoover spoke on leadership—having the initiative to train and aid others; and Braden McGraw spoke on character—distinguishing individuality with respect for others.

Each student was awarded a membership certificate and pin by Mr. David Hays and Nick Schweers.

After accepting this honor, students pledged to maintain high scholastic standing, to hold as fundamental and worthy an untarnished character, to endeavor intelligently and courageously to be a leader, and to give of themselves freely in service to others.

The National Honor Society is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students.

More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since their beginnings in 1921.

Following the ceremony, a reception was held for Honor Society members and their parents in the Dining Hall-Brahma Room.



JOYCE NIX/ST. BERNARD

Front row: Hyoseok (Jake)Lim, Yunji (Ella) Hong, Leslie O'Donnell, Greer Cauthen, and Isabel Smith. Middle Row: Madison McMahon, Ramonah Gibson, Anna Gongre, Mary Grace Vinson, Xinyu (Kiki) Zeng, and Will Sciaroni. Back row: Thomas Bolin, Samuel George, Christopher Woods, Nate Giffin, Theresa Gamble, and David Schartung. Not pictured is Zana Wilson.

Veterans (from Front)

In a long tradition among the American Legion, poppies will be placed on the fence in Cullman's Veteran's Park at Sportsman Lake. According to the American Legion, the Poppy Program raises community awareness and respect for our veterans by educating Auxiliary members and the public about the symbol of the poppy, taken from a line in the poem "In Flanders Fields" written on the battlefront during World War I by Lt. Col. John McCrae, M.D.

"In support of the Legion, the Ladies Auxiliary that was re-activated in 2014, will be assisting with a special project of covering the fence around the Veterans' Park at Sportsman's Lake with crocheted and knitted red poppies in remembrance of our deceased veterans," Reid said.

"Since there are those who cannot crochet or knit, poppies will be furnished free of charge to place on the fence. The Auxiliary asked the DAR members if they would like to help, and both organizations will have booths right outside the gate distributing poppies after the ceremony on the 23rd. Those that can knit or crochet, are welcome to place their own poppies on the fence."

A moving and inspirational ceremony with several speeches and performances is sure to remind all about the true meaning of this holiday weekend.

The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. on the 23rd at Sportsman Lake.

CANCER SURVIVORS AND CAREGIVERS RECOGNIZED AT ANNUAL RELAY FOR LIFE BREAKFAST

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – The American Cancer Society's Relay for Life of Cullman County hosted a special breakfast to honor those who have fought or are currently fighting cancer. The breakfast is held each year, during the week before the Relay for Life event. The 2015 Survivors' Breakfast was held on Wednesday at Cullman Church of Christ, located at the intersection of Childhaven Road and Alabama Highway 157.

Each cancer survivor received their pin for another year of survivorship and a purple Relay for Life Survivor shirt, which they will wear at the May 1 event at the Cullman County Fairgrounds.

Students from Holly Pond High School's Key Club, the Holly Pond Civitan Club and Cullman Regional Medical Center provided the meal for the guests. All cancer survivors were welcome to attend the free event.

Special moments from the breakfast were when cancer survivor Mrs. Wanda David spoke to the group about her own cancer story and how Relay for Life helped her in her time of need. Barbara Marsh, another survivor, gave a beautiful rendition of "Amazing Grace," which resulted in a standing ovation.

"I am just so excited that we were able to have this many survivors come and participate," said Haley Marecle of the American Cancer Society.

"We are thankful for everyone because without them, we wouldn't be where we are nationally – across the board with cancer. We are very happy that each of them could come out so we could show our appreciation to them."

All cancer survivors will also be recognized the night of Relay for Life, with a special dinner at 5 p.m. at the Cullman County Fairgrounds.

The opening ceremonies for the annual fundraiser will begin at 6 p.m. The survivors will take the first lap of the evening around 7 p.m.

They will be honored, along with those who've lost the battle to cancer, at the 9 p.m. Luminary Ceremony.

"Relay for Life is a good thing," said survivor Wanda David.

"It is helping to do more research and find things early. It's coming up with money that helps patients. It helps them with medicines and with the gas and with the little things that we don't think about sometimes. I really appreciate all the things that Relay for Life does, I enjoy it."

Luminaries were available for purchase at the Wednesday morning breakfast and will also be available on the night of Relay for Life.

Luminaries can also be purchased in advance from any Relay for Life team member.

For more information about Relay for Life, contact Helen Allen at 256-709-4019 or visit RelayforLife.org/cullmanal.



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The Holly Pond High School Key Club served breakfast to cancer survivors at the annual breakfast.

"Relay for Life is a good thing. It is helping to do more research and find things early. It's coming up with money that helps patients. It helps them with medicines and with the gas and with the little things that we don't think about sometimes."

Wanda David, Survivor



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Mrs. Myrna Hermetz is a 53-year cancer survivor.

Show (from Front)

owners in the restoration and preservation of their vehicles," and this show will allow owners that have worked hard on their vehicles to show off their work, and perhaps even inspire someone else to start restoring a Pontiac of their own.

Along with the opportunity to look at some fantastic cars, Cullmanites will be able to just gather as a community at one of the best parks the city has to offer.

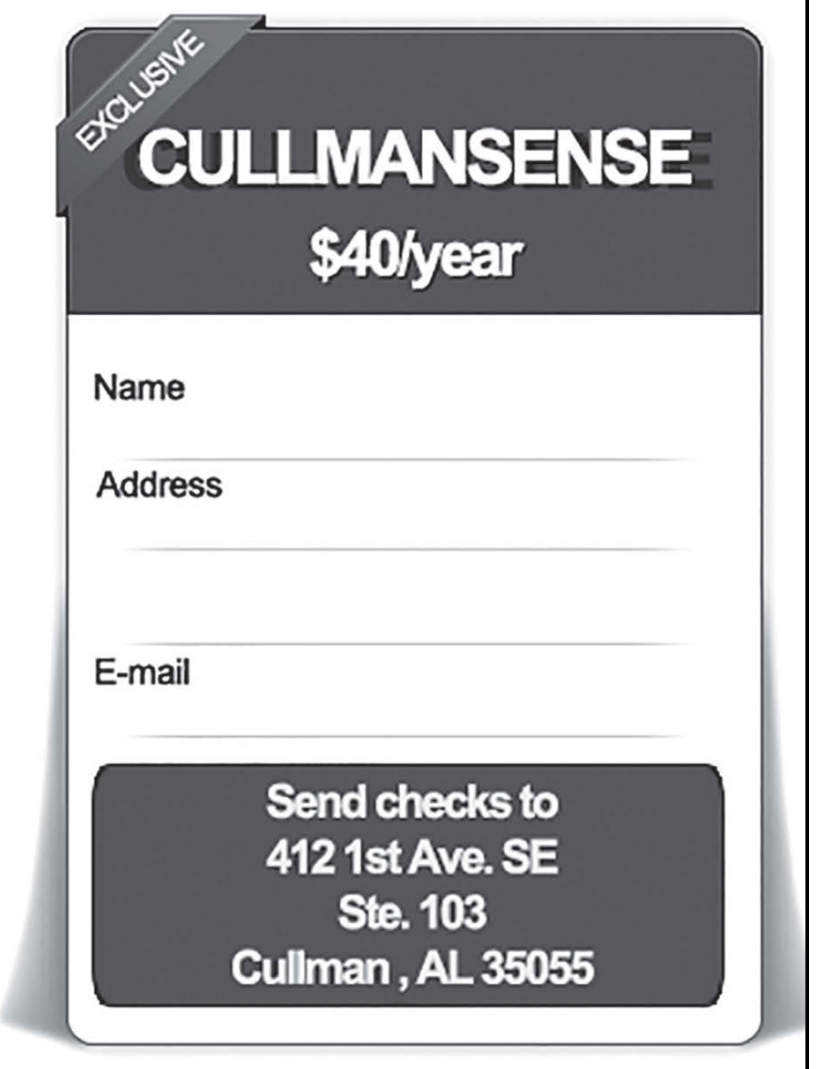
There will be goodie bags and music. Vendors are welcome to sell food at the event and the convenience store at the park will be open as well.

The event requires a $20 registration fee for those wanting to include their cars in the show. Attending the show is free.

Awards for the cars will be given out at 1 p.m.

Even for those that aren't Pontiac, Oakland or GMC enthusiast, this event provides a fun reason to take the family to the park. If the Weather Channel's prediction holds, it will be 77 degrees and sunny the day of the event. After the show is over, consider sticking around to visit Veteran's Memorial Park or, for the adventurous, try feeding the tenacious and always hungry geese that gather right at the edge of the lake.

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May 4, 2015

RELIGIOUS SPOTLIGHT: MEET MARK SANFORD, PASTOR OF CORNERSTONE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – Mark K. Sanford is the senior and founding pastor of Cornerstone Church of the Nazarene. He has been a Nazarene all his life and has served as a Nazarene Pastor for 10 years. He has been married to the lovely Ashley Sanford for nine years. They have three children: Emma Grace, Olivia Cooper and John Luke, and are expecting their fourth child later this year.

"I received my calling earlier in life," said Pastor Mark. "I was about 12 years old when I received my call to preach but it wasn't until my college years that I really began to accept that call," he grinned.

"I hold a B.S. in Ministry and Leadership from Oklahoma Wesleyan University. I have done graduate work at Asbury Theologian Seminary, and I am currently pursuing a M.A. in Religion with an emphasis in Preaching from Trevecca Nazarene University. I have pastored at several different Nazarene churches in Oklahoma and Arkansas before taking the position here in Cullman."

If you take a step back and just watch the way Pastor Mark interacts with his congregation, it is obvious he enjoys doing what he does. His love for God is infectious and it shows.

"My wife and I love people and love to build relationships," Sanford began.

"As the church grows, it becomes more difficult to have those close relationships we would like to have with everyone. Managing a group of people is never easy but it is the most rewarding thing I have ever done," he mused, then added, "Baptizing people, praying with people, or just having honest conversations about what God is doing in their lives has to be the most rewarding part of pastoring."

Completely dedicated to the Lord, Sanford and his congregation are doing great things. He is definitely an asset to the young church.

"Cornerstone Church is a great place to belong," he explained.

"We truly believe you won't find a friendlier place in town. While we are a new church, we have a great range of ages from young singles to retirees. Our worship is passionate and upbeat and we have songs that most people can relate to. We believe in the power of the Word of God and so we believe you will hear a challenging and Biblical message."



MARK SANFORD

Pastor Mark Sanford preaches the Word of God.

Down to earth and ready to help, Pastor Mark does a great job in bringing the Word of God to his flock. If you happen to see him out and about, make sure to say hello. Chances are, you and he will become fast friends.

For more information about Cornerstone Church, visit CullmanCornerstone.com or follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/NazCornerstone.

> **"Baptizing people, praying with people, or just having honest conversations about what God is doing in their lives has to be the most rewarding part of pastoring."**
> Mark Sanford, Pastor of Cornerstone Church of the Nazarene

Goal (from Front)

to breathe life back into the foundation and is succeeding. The organization managed to raise over $400,000 to assist the many local charities and services they are currently partnered with.

"We pro-rated our agencies by 35 percent last year in August, which was huge," said Sammie Danford, "and then we've worked hard and have done a lot of campaigning."

United Way of Cullman County frequently campaigns around the community by asking employers to allow them time to speak to their employees.

"We go up and tell them our story and let them know who we fund, the agencies that we help, and what our agencies do," explains Danford.

"We're just trying to educate the public of what our value is to the community."

That value is certainly visible when taking a look at the agencies that United Way supports: Cullman Caring for Kids, Hospice of Cullman County, Cullman County Center for the Developmentally Disabled, Victim Services of Cullman, and Girl Scouts are just a few of the agencies that United Way has been giving monthly assistance to in the past year.

"In a quarter, our agencies will touch between 18-20,000 people," Danford said.

United Way of Cullman County has spent time doing different fundraisers to help achieve their goal.

Last year's Girlfriend Gala was a hit with the community, pulling in roughly $13,000. This year's event is set for October 2 and is expected to raise even more.

The organization has also opted to do a couple of fundraisers in local schools. The city schools are participating in Change for Change, a program that will provide a jar to classrooms with the intention of allowing students to fill that jar with change they choose to donate.

In September, United Way will work with both the city and county schools to implement their hat day fundraiser. "We've got stickers that we have made up that say 'Day of Caring, United Way'. We give them to the teachers and the students can pay $1 to buy a sticker to wear a hat." Last year's hat day managed to raise over $2,000.

Meeting their fundraising goal has been a struggle in the past few years due to a few different factors.

"The economy nosedived in '08, which has a huge effect on our donations," said Danford. "Then the tornados came in 2011. People didn't have money to give to us; they were rebuilding."

Despite the difficulties United Way of Cullman County has experienced in the recent past, this year marked a positive turn around for the organization. Where as United Way normally gives 12 checks – one for each month – to each of the agencies it supports, this year the organization was able to approve an extra thirteenth check for each agency.

The next fundraising goal has been raised to $425,000 and Sammie Danford is ready to step up to the challenge. "I love this job. I love United Way and I believe in our agencies and what they do. I'm just grateful to be here and know that this is going to be another good year," stated Danford.

Craft (from Front)

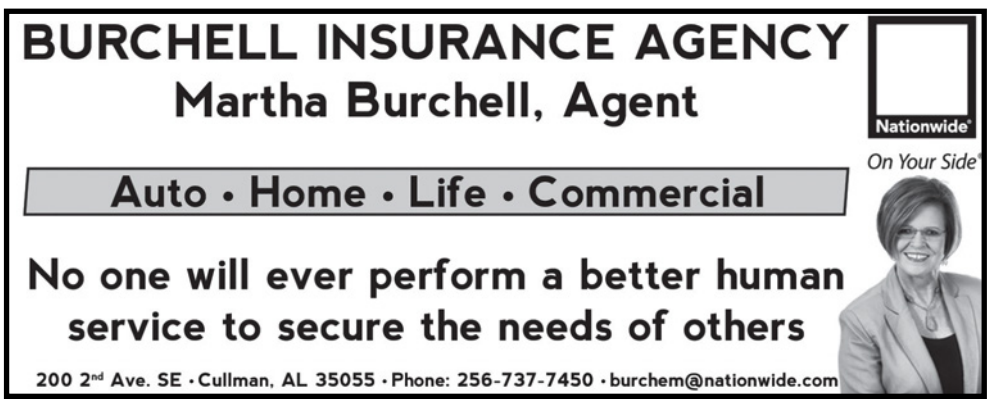
The CRAFTfest workshop will teach participants how to do hand lettering, and how to construct plant terrariums. Along with these hands-on activities, there will be door prizes and a silent auction. There is a $40 fee to attend the event. The money raised from this fundraiser will go directly to the Hospice of Cullman County.

Tickets must be purchased in advance, so check out the CRAFTED Cullman Facebook page to get in touch with someone in order to attend.

Along with the lectures, hands-on activities, and door prizes, there will also be a "light hospitality bar available during the event." Connie Sandlin, co-chair of fundraising for Share Club of Cullman, says that a craft event wasn't the first choice for fundraising this spring. "We usually do a Spring Tour of Homes. But, this year, there were not many people who had volunteered their homes to be a part of the tour." Sandlin explains that Beth Caviness had the idea for a crafts event.

The Share Club's initial goal for attendance to the event was 100 people, but Sandlin explained that the number has risen to 150. Sandlin also said that, depending on feedback from the attendees, this event could be made into an annual event, along with a Thanksgiving crafts event.

The Share Club of Cullman has raised over $190,000 since its inception in 1972 and hopes to continue on its fundraising ways with its first ever crafts event. All in all, this event is a win-win for those involved. Attendees learn something new alongside people with the same interests as them while also supporting the Hospice of Cullman. For those interested in learning crafts CRAFTED Cullman will provide valuable hands-on experience.



CULLMAN'S 'FLYING FIFTY' BRING IN KING EDWARD CIGAR PLANT

THESE MEN ON A MISSION HELPED MAKE CULLMAN A LEADER IN INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

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CULLMAN COUNTY MUSEUM

Local businessmen, the "Flying Fifty" volunteer to fly to Florida to bring the King Edward Cigar Plant to Cullman.

CULLMAN – Colonel Cullmann had a vision, to make Cullman the leading agricultural city in the nation. In the 1950s a group of local businessmen, the "Flying Fifty", decided to take things up a notch: they wanted to make Cullman a leader in both agriculture and industry. They went on a quest to bring new industry to Cullman. Completely voluntary and with no appointment, the men climbed aboard a National Guard plane and flew to Jacksonville, Fla. After arriving in Jacksonville, they rented a hotel ballroom (at their own expense) and met with tobacco magnate Carl Swisher, of the Jno. H. Swisher Company and the company's officials. During the meeting, they urged the cigar company to open their new plant in Cullman.

Once the Flying Fifty returned home, they called a mass meeting for the following Saturday night. During the meeting they discussed the fact that Cullman stood a pretty good chance of getting the cigar plant, but it might be necessary to invest some money. By 10 p.m. that night, they had $200,000 in pledges.

The following Monday, Mayor J. W. Arnold, Chamber President Hugh Brindley and Industrial Chairman Roy Drinkard flew back to Jacksonville and placed the pledges on President Carl Swisher's desk.

"Does that sufficiently demonstrate our interest?" Mr. Drinkard asked with a sparkle in his eye.

"Yes, it demonstrates an interest, gentlemen, and we will come to Cullman if a suitable plant site can be provided," Mr. Swisher said with a sly smile on his face.

Not long after that second trip to Jacksonville, the men learned they needed $78,000 immediately to purchase the land for their new plant, but the Chamber of Commerce only had $84 in its treasury. Eleven men attended an emergency 10 p.m. meeting at the mayor's office.

When less than $10,000 was produced, someone had a bright idea: "Operation Cigar Shack."

"Operation Cigar Shack" began after a contractor's tool shack had been set up on the courthouse square.

Two days later, on a Saturday morning, both local radio stations suspended their regular programming and set microphones up in the shack. Then Southern Bell arrived and installed three telephones - without numbers.

"Number please?" the telephone operator would ask and the caller only had to say, 'Cigar' and the call was transferred to the shack.

In the shack, Don Cornish, a local businessman, would pick up the phone. He explained, over and over, that cold hard cash - not pledges was needed immediately in order to make the much needed cigar factory a reality.

The people of Cullman County responded and by 4 p.m. that afternoon, $84,000 in cash had been collected and stashed in garbage cans.

The land was purchased, but before the plant was finished the company found it necessary to make some major changes, which delayed production and reduced the original number of employees.

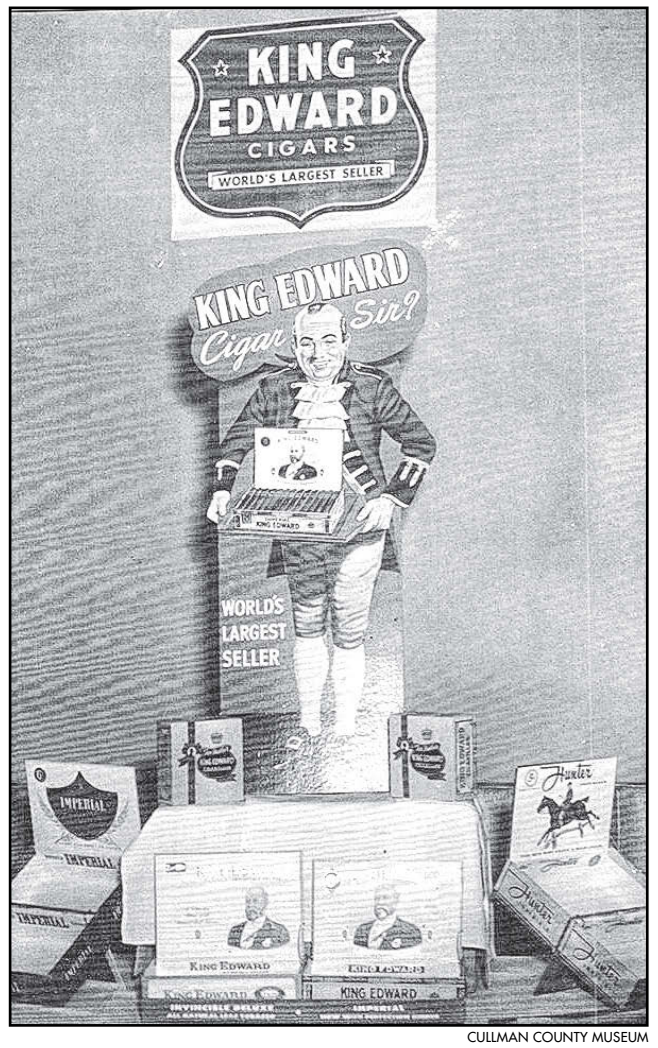
The King Edward Cigar Plant finally opened in 1957 with 30 employees. The plant gradually increased the amount of employees to 500 at peak production.

Ernie Reddick was the first managerial staff member for King Edward. Ernie made the area his home and is a volunteer, along with his wife, for the Meals on Wheels Program.

The King Edward Cigar Plant was just the beginning. Soon Cullman Products, Bendix-Westinghouse, Daubert Chemical, John Bagwell Poultry, Porter Mills and National Screw, just to mention a few, were added to the list of industrial expansion.

In 1998, the "Flying Fifty" were awarded the first Dr. E.G. Plunkett Visionary Award for their outstanding contribution to the industrial and economic development of the Cullman community.

Some members of this remarkable group of men were Roy Drinkard, Dr. R.F. Williford, Joe Sapp, Ottis Burrow, Mickey Clem, Crant Waldrop, Dr. Dwight Fuller, Fred Hale, Luther Hinds, Grady Moss, Elbert Ponder, Bill Wachter, Robert Schaefer, Kermit Gorham, Larkin Yates and Hudson Millar.



CULLMAN COUNTY MUSEUM

The King Edward Cigar Plant opened in 1957 with 30 employees.

IF THIS CAUGHT YOUR EYE, WHY AREN'T YOU ADVERTISING HERE?

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MIRRORING HISTORY: CULLMAN HOSPITAL TO FOLSOM CENTER

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CULLMAN – From 1939 to 1995, the building located at 401 Arnold Street NE in Cullman was home to Cullman Hospital. Today it is the Folsom Center, a skilled nursing facility and rehabilitation center.

The building has been remodeled over the years, but remains a place of healthcare, healing and love.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The old Cullman Hospital building is now home to the Folsom Center.



GREG BURDEN

Cullman Hospital was in operation from 1939 to 1995.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL CELEBRATES LOCAL FARMERS

CP&R HOSTS ANNUAL EVENT FOR FIRST TIME

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Cullman City Parks & Recreation has taken over the Strawberry Festival this year and things went off without a hitch. People from all over Cullman County came out and supported the area farmers and enjoyed all kinds of strawberry treats. The event began Friday night at 4 p.m. with the opening of the Farmer's Market. On Saturday, the festivities started at 8 a.m. and featured a sizable arts and crafts fair, a 5K and 10K run, and live music, in addition to other activities. The event took place at the Festhalle Farmer's Market and Depot Park.

Local farmers lined Festhalle, selling their goods and mingling with their customers. Full of excitement, the area was buzzing with fun.

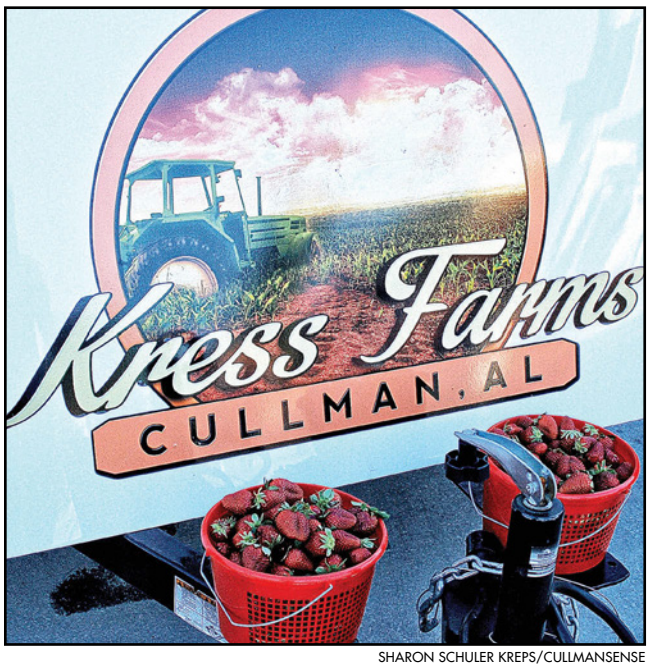
"My husband and I have been selling our produce for four years now," said Ashley Kress of Kress Farms. "Our strawberries are home grown here in Cullman, Ala. We are located behind Cullman Regional Medical Center at Kress Farms. We grow a lot of other things too, such as sweet potatoes, onions, lettuce and lots of other things. If people miss us this weekend, they can stop by our shed behind CRMC or they can visit us here at the Festhalle on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays."

"This is the third year I've done the Strawberry Festival, and it's always a fun weekend," said Marisa Griffin, owner of Griffin Family Farms. "I make all natural, hand crafted organic products for the whole family. I'm out here every Saturday through the market season and I have products at Herbs and Organics in Cullman," she smiled.

Although it may be hard to believe, there are still some who have visited the Strawberry Festival for the first time this year.

"This is the first time I've come to the Strawberry Festival," said Kathy Loveless. "I'm a grandmother and I don't usually have the kids," she said as she watched her grandchildren play on the inflatables that were scattered around the area. "We're excited about all the stuff going on here on Saturday, too, so we'll be here both days," she grinned.

Though the festival is over, the Farmers Market remains open. Shopping at the Market helps support the local farmers that work to supply Cullman County with fresh produce and other goods.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Strawberry Festival gave Cullmanites a taste of the season's harvest.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Festival hosted a variety of activities for all ages.

TOWNSON PROCLAIMS APRIL "FAIR HOUSING MONTH"

Leanne H. West
Contributor

CULLMAN - Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson recently proclaimed the month of April 2015 "Fair Housing Month" in the City of Cullman in recognition of the importance of fair housing to our way of life.

April 11, 2015, marked the 47th anniversary of the passage of the United States Fair Housing Law, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which enunciated a national policy of fair housing without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The effective implementation of this policy depends on the cooperation and action of all levels of government.

"We want Cullman to be a warm and welcoming community for everyone," said Mayor Townson. "That's why we fully support fair housing policies, because we want to have a community where everyone has equal freedom and opportunity to good housing as well as to good schools and job opportunities."

Mayor Townson urges citizens to always obey the letter and spirit of the Fair Housing Law to ensure that everyone has the individual rights guaranteed to them by the United States Constitution.

Accepting the proclamation from Mayor Townson were Gail Busbey, Amy Handley, and Stormy Bland – all from the City Clerk's Office.



LEANNE H. WEST

Gail Busbey, Mayor Max A. Townson, Amy Handley, and Stormy Bland.

Rotary (from Front)

2013.

"I was a farmer, raised on a farm," Mr. Parker explained. "I left home and went with Uncle Sam. I was in pretty good shape from working on the farm. A lot of those boys wasn't. There was a lot of marching, but that didn't bother me at all because I was used to following a mule in the fields," he chuckled.

After completing Boot Camp in Fort Blanding, Fla., Mr. Parker went to Fort Bragg in N.C. for more training.

"We took our training in Camp Blanding, Florida and it was hot," he reminisced.

"Then they picked us up and sent us to North Carolina, where there was snow on the ground! Our bodies weren't used to that so it took us a while to get going."

After spending some time in North Carolina, Mr. Parker was sent to Sherbet, France and then to Le Harve, also in France, and spent most of his time as part of the U.S. Army infantry as a marksman.

"A lot of boys were marksmen, some of them couldn't shoot," he said with a grin. "But us country boys had always hunted, you know, we squirrel hunted and rabbit hunted so it wasn't a problem for us to be a marksman. Some of the Yankees, I like to call them, from New York and New Jersey, they had a hard time qualifying because they had never gone out squirrel hunting."

Mr. Parker's troop was one of the five troops that liberated the people from the Nazi concentration camp in Krakow.

"I couldn't believe, wouldn't have believed if I hadn't have been there and seen for myself that a human being could treat another human being in that way," he said, shaking his head and thinking of the poor souls he helped rescue.

Mr. Parker was honorably discharged from the Army with a T5 rank. The T is for technical and the 5 is for Corporal. He had earned the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantry Badge.

The first thing Mr. Parker did once he returned home was head to Hartselle where his uncle was the principal at the school. He was given a job overseeing the school buses, which is where he met and later married his sweetheart Virginia.

"I was out there checking some of the buses and gassing them up when I saw her walk across the campus," he smiled at Virginia who sat across from him.

"I asked one of the bus drivers 'Is that girl married?' When the driver told me no, I found out she was the P.E. teacher. I remember telling the driver, 'Well, I'm going to date her before the year is over' but I turned out marrying her before the year was over!" That was 65 years ago and they are still crazy about each other.

Mr. and Mrs. Parker are extremely excited about the Honor Flight. Mr. Parker has never been to the memorials and looks forward to seeing them in person. The one thing he hopes to find is what ever happened to his dear friend Captain Benjamin Blackmon.

"Last time I saw him he was on a stretcher, he had gotten wounded," he said sadly.

"We hardly ever did any night fighting, but we did that night. He got wounded and here came the guys that took him off in a stretcher. According to my book they lost him, they don't know if he made it or not, he hasn't been located."

We thank Mr. Parker for his years of service during World War II and pray he has a safe journey on May 6. We look forward to hearing about all the details from the trip when he returns.

The Tuscaloosa Rotary Honor Flight (TRHF) recognizes American veterans for their sacrifices and achievements by flying them to Washington, DC to see THEIR memorial free of charge.

Top priority is given to WW II, Korean, and terminally ill veterans from all wars. In the future, TRHF will be expanded to include Vietnam veterans.

In order for TRHF to achieve this goal, guardians fly with the veterans on every flight providing assistance and helping veterans have a safe, memorable and rewarding experience.

For more information about this program, go to their website at RotaryTuscaloosa.com/about-us/honor-flight.

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SMITH LAKE BECOMES GIANT YARD SALE

BARGAIN HUNTING BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

TRIMBLE – Smith Lake Park was the place to be this past Saturday as the community gathered together and held a mammoth yard sale. Attendees walked from booth to booth with their arms loaded with goodies. Whether the items being sold were just to make a little extra cash or were the result of some serious spring cleaning, each seller had his or her own different reasons for being there.

"I have brought some antiques and stuff that I've shock painted to try and sell today," said Beth Kicker.

"I am trying to raise money for our son Dawson's doctor bills. He is 9 years old and suffers from seizures. This is the first time I've sold anything here, but I have sold a few things at other sales around town."

Yard sales are great for people of all ages. There is almost always something for everyone.

"We have been to the other community yard sales they've had and were able to find 3-year-old Rylan lots of things, he loves to look at all the toys," said shopper Amy Moore as she clasped the little boy's hand in hers.

"I think the community yard sales are a good idea. Some people have more flea market items, but for the people who are actually doing the yard sale part, they have a really nice setup and offer some really great deals," said Lela Carlile, smiling as she showed off the bargains she had found.

Those that missed Saturday's yard sale missed a good one. Smith Lake Park provided the perfect place to enjoy the beautiful weather and spend the day in pursuit of excellent buys.



IMAGES BY SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE



Shoppers browse through a variety of items at the Smith Lake Park Community Yard Sale.





Their first steps.
Their first car.
Their first day of college.

Katherine Morgan, Agent
909 Fisher Street SW
Cullman, AL 35055
Bus: 256-734-4640
katherine.morgan.fc5a@statefarm.com

No matter what "first" comes next in your kids' lives, I can help you be ready. Ask me about auto loans, savings accounts, college savings and more.

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Monday

Cullman Kiwanis Club
The Cullman Kiwanis Club invites all local men and women who are interested in taking part in community service along with great fellowship, fun, networking, and learning to attend their weekly luncheon meeting at 12 noon each Monday at the All Steak. Come see what Kiwanis is all about and enjoy a great luncheon meal as well.

Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group
Victim Services of Cullman sponsors a Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group meeting every Monday evening from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the old County Board of Education Building with childcare available. For additional information please call 256-775-2600. CRISIS HOTLINE - 256-734-6100.

Overeaters Anonymous Gather at Grace Episcopal
Members of Overeaters Anonymous meet every Monday, at 9:30 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church in the Carriage House located on Church premises. Further information is available at 256-747-6218 or 256-352-1143. Everyone is invited to attend these gatherings.

Cornerstone Revival Ladies Prayer Meeting
A Ladies Prayer meeting is conducted each Monday night at 7 p.m. at Cornerstone Revival Center. For additional information call 256-796-2899. All interested women are invited to attend.

Tuesday

Cullman Caring for Kids in Need of Donations
If you are able to contribute to Cullman County's Community Food Band, the 'Caring for Kids' organization, they would be grateful. Non-perishable food items are needed, and of course cash enables them to purchase needed products to fill their empty shelves. Please call 256-739-1111 to see how to help or mail checks or money orders to Cullman Caring for Kids, P. O. Box 698, Cullman, Alabama 35056-0698. Thanks in advance for anything you can do.

Knifty Knitters Weekly Meeting
Members of the Cullman Knifty Knitters group meet each Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m. in the Cullman County Library. Everyone is invited to come learn how to knit yarn and needles are free. This group is open to all ages, both accomplished knitters and those wishing to learn the art form. Crocheters also are invited to take part in these weekly meetings. Please call Lesia for more info 256-734-2720, ext. 23.

Emotions Anonymous Support Group Meeting
An Emotions Anonymous Support Group meets each Tuesday at noon at Grace Episcopal Church Carriage House. Those interested are invited to attend these group sessions. Further information is available through the Group Director's office at 256-734-3605 or 256-796-8440.

Wednesday

St. Monica's Group
St. Monica's Group for those addicted to alcohol or drugs meets every Wednesday night at 7 p.m. in the Rectory Basement of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. All are welcome to attend who feel the need. For further information please contact Brian at 256-595-0515 or Rita at 256-507-0358.

Church Group Wednesday Nights at CWAC
Youth groups, Sunday School Classes and other Church groups are invited to take part in 'Church Group Nights at Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center every Wednesday night from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. Please call 256-775-SWIM (7946).

Latter Day Saints Genealogy Library
The Genealogy Library at the Latter Day Saints (L.D.S.) Church is open to the public each Wednesday night from 7 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Don Jones is available to open the Library at other times, if needed, so please contact him at 256-784-5098.

Girls & Boys Club at Spirit Life
Spirit Life Church will host a Girls & Boys Club meeting for those 12 and under every Wednesday beginning at 7 p.m. at the church. All are welcome. Please call the church for further info 256-739-3326.

Thursday

New Vision Support Group
There is a New Vision Support Group which will meet at 10 a.m. and everyone interested in this subject is welcome to attend. The program is at Hilltop Community Center. Additional information is available by calling Linda Estes, 256-739-4653.

'Celebrate Recovery' at Hanceville First Baptist Church
There will be a 'Celebrate Recovery' meeting tonight starting at 7 p.m. at Hanceville First Baptist Church. Childcare will be available. Additional info Church office at 256-352-9150. Open to all!

Ageless Grace Fitness Class
Come join in the Ageless Grace Fitness Class held each Thursday evening starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Cullman Civic Center. Leader Ann Caretti will show attendees the latest fitness tips available. The event is sponsored by Cullman Park and Recreation Department. Call 256-734-9157 for more information.

Thursday Afternoon Overeaters Anonymous Meeting
Those interested are invited to attend the weekly Thursday afternoon meetings of Overeaters Anonymous which begin at 4:45 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church's Carriage House. For additional information please call 734-376-2124 or 256-352-1143.

Friday

2nd Fridays in downtown Cullman
Come out and watch the second installment of Battle of the Bands in downtown Cullman in front of The Downtown Grill. This is the perfect shop late, eat great event. Call the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce at 256-734-0454 for more information.

'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center
The entertainment for senior citizens is 'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center starting at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited. Come enjoy some exercise (but not too physical!) and fellowship with friends. They bowl every Wednesday and Friday afternoons at 1 p.m.

Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild of Cullman
Members of the Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild of Cullman will gather at the Colonel Cullman Museum starting at 9:30 a.m. All interested quilters are invited to attend this meeting.

Saturday

CRAFTED in Cullman
At Northbrook Baptist Church, the Share Club of Cullman will host CRAFTED Cullman. The event, which will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 12:30 p.m., will be an opportunity for people interested in crafts to learn new techniques and hear from guest speakers. The crafting workshop will show participants how to do hand lettering, and how to construct plant terrariums. Along with these hands-on activities, there will be door prizes and a silent auction. There is a $40 fee to attend the event. The money raised from this fundraiser will go directly to the Hospice of Cullman County.

Laughter Yoga at the Cullman Civic Center
Everyone is invited to take part in 'Laughter Yoga' classes each Saturday morning starting at 10 a.m. Donations accepted but no set fee is charged. Come start your weekend out with some great 'laughs'! Please call 256-734-9157 for additional information.

Next Monday

Bosom Buddies Support Group
The Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by breast cancer. The group will hold its next meeting on Monday, March 16th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Center's Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2 (1890 AL Highway 157, Cullman, AL 35058).

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LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

MONDAY
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.

TUESDAY
- Pickin' Under the Pavilion at the Senior Center at 6:30 p.m.
- Square Dancing Lessons at East Point Community Center from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
- Karaoke Night at Grumpy's at 7 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- Karaoke Night at Cadillac Ron's at 7 p.m.
- Ladies' Night at Cadillac Ron's from 5-8 p.m.

THURSDAY
- Open Mic Night at Brothers from 8 p.m. to close
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- Karaoke Night at Cadillac Ron's at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY
- 2nd Fridays in downtown Cullman from 6-11 p.m.
- Live Music at Brothers
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close

SATURDAY
- CRAFTED in Cullman at Northbrook Baptist Church from 9-12:30 p.m.
- Live Music at Brothers
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close

NEXT MONDAY
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.

BUSY BEE CAFÉ HAPPY HOUR SPECIALS
Wine Wednesdays • Thirsty Thursdays
Fill'er Up Fridays • Sudsy Saturdays
LIVE TRIVIA EACH THURSDAY 6-8 P.M.

RESIDENTIAL RECIPES

WATERMELON SMASH COCKTAIL

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

This watermelon recipe is absolutely terrific, and will be just what the doctor ordered after a long winter. So shake off the last chill of winter with the refreshing taste of watermelon.

Ingredients:
- 1/4 cup - water
- 1/4 cup - granulated sugar
- 8 cups - diced seedless watermelon (1 pound)
- 1/4 cup - fresh lime juice
- 1 3/4 cups - blueberries
- 3/4 cup - lightly packed fresh mint leaves, plus 8 sprigs for garnish
- 1 1/4 cups - silver tequila
- ice

Instructions:
- In a small saucepan, bring the water to a simmer with the sugar, and stir over moderate heat until the sugar is dissolved, for about 1 minute; let the sugar syrup cool.
- In a blender, puree the watermelon until smooth. Set a fine-mesh strainer over a bowl and strain the watermelon juice, pressing gently on the solids to extract as much juice as possible. Discard the pulp.
- In a large pitcher, combine the sugar syrup with the lime juice, blueberries and mint leaves. Using a wooden spoon, lightly muddle the blueberries and mint. Add the watermelon juice and tequila. Refrigerate until chilled, for about 2 hours.
- Pour the cocktail into a tall ice-filled glass. Garnish with the mint sprigs and serve.

DECEPTIVE BREADSTICKS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

The season of spring and upcoming beach vacations are upon us, and that means it is time to shed those extra winter pounds. That can be difficult, however, when you are craving something that isn't so healthy, like pizza or breadsticks. Help is here for that craving with these deceptively delicious breadsticks made from cauliflower.

Ingredients:
- 4 cups - cauliflower
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups - mozzarella cheese
- 3 tsps. - oregano
- 4 cloves - garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 extra cup - mozzarella, for the topping

Instructions:
- Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a baking sheet with wax paper.
- Roughly chop cauliflower into florets. Add the florets to your food processor and pulse until cauliflower resembles rice.
- Microwave for 10 minutes. Place the cooked cauliflower in a large bowl and add the 4 eggs, 2 cups of mozzarella, oregano, garlic, salt and pepper and mix.
- Shape dough into a rectangle for your breadsticks.
- Bake the crust for about 25 minutes or until a golden brown. Once golden, sprinkle with remaining mozzarella cheese and put back in the oven for another 5 minutes or until cheese has melted.
- Slice and serve.

WE WANT TO PUBLISH YOUR RECIPE! • SEND SUBMISSIONS TO RECIPES@CULLMANSENSE.COM

NEW BUSINESS

KARMA'S COFFEE HOUSE TO BRING VINTAGE VIBE TO WAREHOUSE DISTRICT LATER THIS MONTH

Mary Standifer
Contributor

CULLMAN – A new locally owned coffee house is planning to open its doors to Cullmanites later this May. First time business owner and long time barista, Katie Nelms, has been working fervently to bring the vision of Karma's Coffee House to life. What is now a door covered in brown paper beside Rumors Deli will soon be the entrance to a relaxing atmosphere where customers can come to unwind, listen to live music, and of course, have a cup of coffee.

Karma's will make its home in a more than 2,500 square foot business space located in a historic building in the Warehouse District. The Warehouse District is already home to community favorite businesses such as Rumors Deli, Serendipity, and Flavors; the unique personality of the coffee house will be a tasteful addition to the collection of local businesses in the area. Karma's space features exposed brick walls, wooden rafters, tin pressed ceilings, and a picture window overlooking the railroad tracks behind the building.

With such a vintage styled building, it comes as no surprise that Katie has decided to forgo buying new furniture in favor of antique furnishings. She has revealed that some items have been reupholstered while others have been found at antique shops. It's not just the furniture that is paying homage to the building's personality; "A lot of the décor is art nouveau," Nelms said. This style of art and design features curves mirroring those observed in nature as well as complex linear forms. The style was popular from 1890 until World War I.

Katie doesn't plan to only brew coffee at her shop; there are many extra features in store. Plans have been made to construct a 12 foot by 8 foot stage to accommodate live musical performances.

The building is expected to be able to hold roughly 124 people allowing the coffee house to become a quality venue. The shop will feature an impressive selection of used books for sale as well as an array of light foods and snacks. Sandwiches, salads, and both vegan and vegetarian foods are just a few of the dishes that will be offered at Karma's.

The shop's creative owner is already formulating community outreach programs.

While the details are not yet set in stone, Katie has plans to host a fundraiser for local schools. Early stages of the plan will allow for students to submit artwork, which will be featured on a coffee cup and sold at Karma's with the proceeds going back to the school.

Katie has put emphasis on the comfortable, inviting aura around the shop. "There's really nowhere else you can go and unwind like a coffee house," said Nelms. The shop is looking to provide an environment conducive to spending time with family and friends in an exciting creative setting. Karma's will feature an array of furnishings, ranging from comfortable lounge furniture to a large farm table that will help in achieving this goal.

Boasting an impressive stage, specialty foods, coffees from Birmingham and Atlanta, and a one of a kind style and atmosphere, Karma's Coffee House is sure to become a hotspot for locals looking for a fun place to spend time. Customers can expect to be able to visit the shop for themselves toward the middle of May.

THE VINE CELLAR: CELEBRATING LIFE WITH WINE AND FLOWERS

Mary Standifer
Contributor

CULLMAN – Atop the foundation of Colonel Cullman's home at 302 1st Ave SE sits The Vine Cellar, a shop that offers floral arrangements, fine wine, artisan chocolate, decorative items, regular and craft beer, and a rentable event venue. The shop's motto is "Celebrate life with Wine and Flowers" and that is exactly what one can expect to do upon entering.

"The Vine Cellar is a place to go to give yourself or someone you care about a special treat. Flowers for a loved one or a bottle of wine for an afternoon of relaxation; these are the extras that make life fun," explains Manager Michael Sapp.

The Vine Cellar is managed by both Michael Sapp and Candace Blevins. The shop boasts one of the most extensive fine wine selections in Cullman. With an on and off premise wine and beer license, beer and wine tastings are a goal of the shop.

"We will have a wine tasting on May 8 to coincide with 2nd Fridays in downtown Cullman. Our wine tasting events are always a big hit and provide adults with a relaxing atmosphere to come try a lot of different wines," said Sapp.

The shop's building has a beautiful event room that may be rented out for activities such as engagement parties, baby showers, fundraisers, and corporate events just to name a few. The spacious room has a gorgeously colored wooden floor as well as an exposed brick wall where an exit to the outside sits. One may even request to have a beer or wine tasting provided at an event.

The family atmosphere helps set the shop apart. "Cullman is essentially a city for families," asserted Sapp. "Candace and I both spend a lot of time with our families and that's one of the things that makes The Vine Cellar special. It is a local family business."

The Vine Cellar is also a team player when it comes to working with the community as well. "The Vine Cellar is a community focused business," said Sapp.

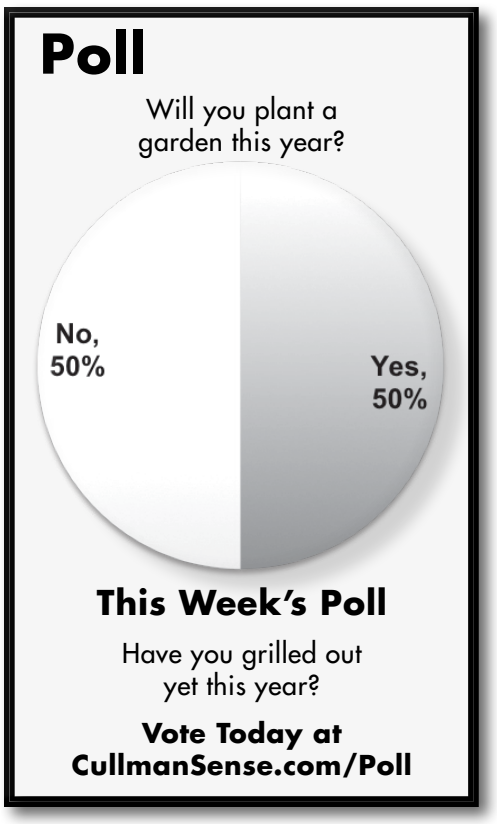
"We work closely with the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce and the Cullman Tourism Board to help increase tourism in downtown Cullman. Lately, we have noticed an increase in traffic to our store from travelers passing through Cullman by way of I-65."

With a beautiful building, quality services, and unique products abounding, The Vine Cellar is definitely one of the most community tailored businesses available to the public of Cullman today. There truly is a little something for everyone who visits this quaint local shop.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Program Facilitator needed for local domestic violence intervention program.
Full time, BS degree required. Send resume to: vsoced@vsoccullman.org





cpr& cullman city parks & recreation

WHAT'S ON DECK AT PARKS AND REC....

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Youth Outdoor Adventure** will begin Saturday, April 4 and continue for 6 weeks meeting Saturday each week at 9am. Adventures will include hiking, rock climbing, paddling, rappelling, and more! Program is open to ages 7-14; registration is open now at the Cullman Civic Center for $75. Parents are encouraged to attend with their children and will not be charged. Call 256-734-9157 for info.
- **Art in the Park** will take place Saturday, April 11 at Heritage Park featuring craft vendors, an art show, sidewalk chalk contests, and FREE crafts for your child. Information to enter the art show is online at www.cullmanrecreation.org. Winners receive cash prizes, so be sure to display your art!
- **Father/Son Night Out** will take place on Friday, April 17 from 7-10:30pm at Heritage Park. This event will feature great bonding time for sons ages 5-12 and their fathers with games including team events, capture the flag and more. Registration is $30 for a father/son pair at the Civic Center.
- **Mother/Daughter PJ Party** will also take place April 17 from 7-10:30pm at the Wellness & Aquatic Center. Register at the Civic Center for games, makeovers, and great bonding time!
- **Youth Tennis League Spring Session** starts April 20, 2015 at the Cullman High School Tennis Courts. Athletes ages 5-14 can register and will be sorted by skill levels into different groups and practice times. Cost is $80 for the 4 week session will include matches and practices. Registration is now open at the Cullman Civic Center.
- **Strawberry Festival—May 1 & 2** will be held at the Festhalle Farmer's Market and Depot Park Friday, May 1 from 4-10pm and Saturday, May 2 from 7am-4pm. Come check out dozens of craft vendors, live music, free kids games and rides, and strawberry-themed everything! Farmers will also be on site with the freshest strawberries in the area. Call 256-734-9157 for more information.
- **Camp Cullman Registration Now Open** at the Cullman Civic Center. Camp sessions will be held from June 1-June 26 and July 6-August 7. Camp will be held 5 days a week from 7:45am-5:15pm based at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center with field trips weekly, swimming, arts and crafts, fun and games, activities, and much more. Spaces are limited, so signup now at the Civic Center.

What's Online

CULLMAN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY HONORS LESIA COLEMAN FOR 34 YEARS OF SERVICE

The Cullman County Public Library Board and employees recently honored long time librarian, Lesia Coleman, for her 34 years of outstanding service. On Thursday, in appreciation for her dedication to the library, Coleman was presented with a...

qrne.ws/351



WSCC GETS NEW ART EXHIBIT

The Evelyn Burrow Museum at Wallace State Community College hosted a reception for its newest exhibition, "Equus: Fine Art Photography by Arden Ward Upton," on Thursday. Upton was at the reception and spoke to everyone about the photographs she's chosen for the exhibit.

qrne.ws/352

CITIZEN OF THE WEEK: KATHY MCLEROY

Meet Kathy McLeroy. Kathy is the mother of two grown children, Zackary McLeroy and Brittany (Matthew) Howell. She has three beautiful grandchildren, 9-year-old Miles, 6-year-old Alexa, 1-year-old Ever, and sweet little Georgiabelle, who will make her appearance in May.

qrne.ws/353

NEW BUSINESS

SOUTHERN EATS

HOMEMADE MEALS ON THE GO



NOAH CHANDLER/CULLMANSENSE

Along with their standard dishes, Southern Eats – Meals to Go offers a rotating menu including beef bacon stroganoff, chicken spaghetti, an enchilada bake and strawberry pretzel salad.

Hannah Ward
ward@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – In the hustle and bustle of our day-to-day lives, getting the kids to and from school, going to work, and spending time with your spouse, there is very little time in the day to cook a nice meal that will feed the whole family. So often times we turn to what is easiest – fast food – but unfortunately, this is not always the wisest decision. Do not fret though, Southern Eats – Meals to Go is a take-home meal service located in downtown Cullman, which opened on April 30, that looks to solve this problem.

Co-owners Stephanie Jowers and Laci Schuman explained the origin of this creative idea, "Mostly we just have a lot of friends who are busy moms. We just talked about how it would be great to have something that people could just have another option to eat besides fast food, that they could come home to and sit down as a family together. We cook dinner every night for our family, so we figured we'd do it for our friend's families as well. So that's kind of where we started."

Schuman added, "They come frozen, the casseroles do. You can put them in the fridge before you leave for work and when you come home, they'll be thawed. Thirty minutes later, you just put a salad or green beans with it and you have a meal."

"We make everything homemade, so it's all fresh," claimed Jowers. This dinner alternative is not just fast and easy, but healthy too!

"Our beef is actually from Cullman County, my husband has cattle. So the beef is born, raised and processed here. Then we put everything together ourselves," stated Schuman.

All of their dishes are handcrafted in the back of their location.

One of their main menu options is chicken salad, which comes in two different forms. The first contains grapes, pecans and has a bit of spicy flavoring. The second is creamier and has eggs and relish.

"Then we have two types of pimento cheese as well, and then a yummy apple dip that's good for apples, pretzels or just about anything. These will always be here for you to run by and grab, ready to eat," explained Schuman.

These standard dishes will always be served, but they will add different additions each week.

Possible additions are beef bacon stroganoff, chicken spaghetti, an enchilada bake and strawberry pretzel salad. They also cater small business lunches and dinner parties.

To find out what they are serving each day, call 256-727-4224, or Facebook message Southern Eats – Meals to Go. E-mail southerneatstogo@gmail.com to receive their newsletter updates. They are open Monday and Thursday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and Tuesday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. every week.

COMICS

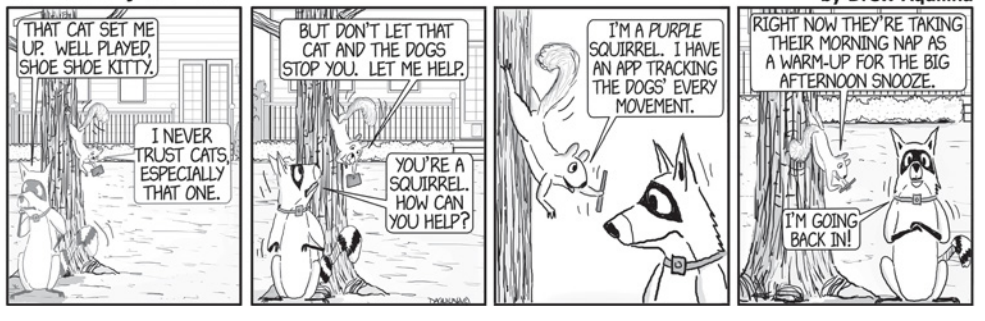
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MAMA'S BOYZ www.jerrycraft.net JERRY CRAFT



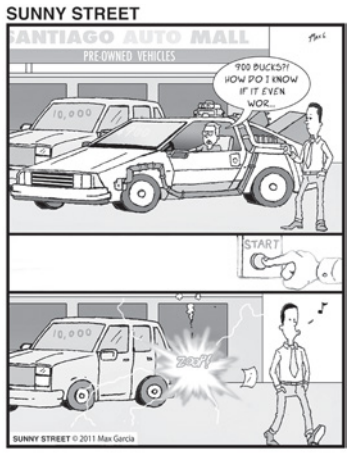
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PETS OF THE WEEK

PACO

Hello my name is Paco and I am about 3 years old. I am a COLLIE mix and I currently weigh 90 LBS. I'm still hanging on to hope that my forever home is out there. I am full of life and I love to play, so please come and visit with me! You may find out I'm a lovable companion!



FRANKLIN

Hello my name is Franklin and I am about 18 months old. I am believed to be a Poodle mix and I currently weigh 16 lbs. I am full of life, love to play and ready to meet my forever family! Please come by and visit with me. You may find out I'm an extremely lovable companion!



ADOPT THESE PETS TODAY

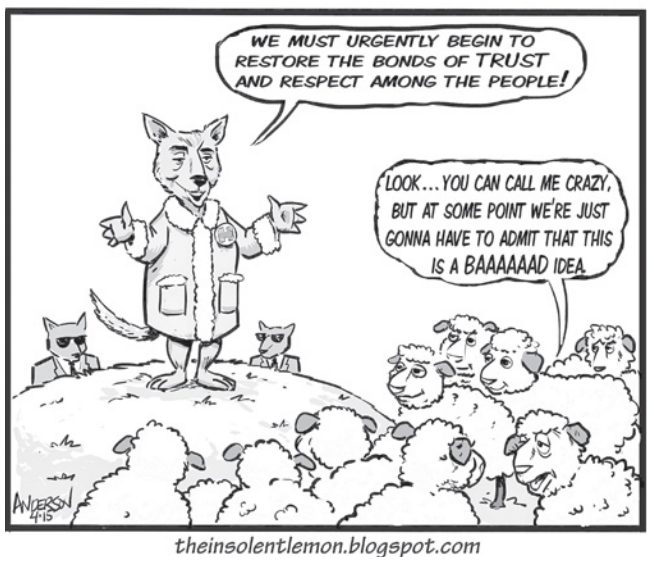
Both of these dogs have an adoption fee of $90 that will include their general exam at the Vet, vaccines, wormer, rabies shot, microchip, spay/neuter, and free 45 days of pet health insurance. Pet Depot will give you a bag of food (you pay taxes) as their way of supporting adoption.

If you know the owner of either dog or if you are interested in adopting one of the dogs, please call 256-734-5448 or come by the Animal Shelter.

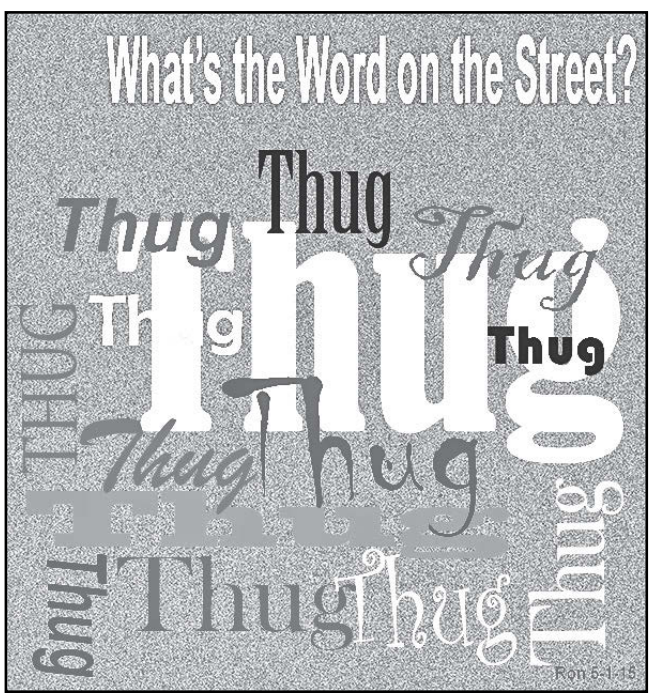
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OPINION

A SOUTHERNER AT A YANKEES GAME

Will Hogue
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BRONX, NY – For most people in Alabama, and much of the south, baseball is not very important. Every once in awhile there will be an Atlanta Braves fan, but even they aren't that serious about their "team." Their baseball fanhood is almost always overshadowed by their allegiance to the Tigers or the Tide.

Growing up in Cullman, baseball seemed to, much like soccer, be a sport for kids in elementary school, and only that.

Sure, Cullman High School was always pretty good at baseball, but that was an aberration of the culture. This, along with my love of basketball and football, built up a healthy distaste for baseball.

I don't disrespect the history of baseball, nor all the things that baseball did for sports and civil rights in America. But, I highly dislike the sport as a spectator, and that was never more so affirmed than when I went to my first game at Yankee Stadium on April 28.

I'd always heard that baseball was totally different to watch when you're actually in the stadium. And that definitely turned out to be true.

My father is from Indianapolis, so I've been to several Indianapolis Colts football games, and more Indiana Pacers games than I'd ever be able to calculate.

To put it in perspective, I've only been to one college football game.

Once I got past the concession stands in the concourse and made my way to the seats, I realized that it had been nearly 10 years since I'd been to an outdoor stadium (the Colts play in a dome – albeit, with a retractable roof).

The game was set to start at 7 p.m. and it was 6:43 as I took my seat. I looked around the stadium at the thousands of seats, and was surprised that that the sea of people I came into the stadium with only amounted to a meager dispersion of fans, with more empty seats than filled ones; trust me, I had a $5 ticket, so I was able to see a lot of seats.

There were announcements on the Jumbotron, along with recognition of sponsors, and a quick recap of the Pinstripe Bowl that was played in the stadium back in December between Penn State and Boston College – this would be the most exciting part of the night, and it was a recap of a meaningless bowl game.

And, all of a sudden, I looked down at the field, and a sport was being played. It was one of the most anticlimactic things I've ever experienced, save for every 4th of July's fireworks (no matter where I am, I'm reminded of how much better it is to be lighting the fuses than watching things explode). There was no 'kickoff' or 'tipoff,' not even a 'Here comes the first pitch, ladies and gentlemen!" It was a bizarre scene.

But, like I said, watching baseball at Yankees Stadium is significantly better than watching it on television.

For one, it was adorable. I kept saying this to my roommates when I got home from the game. It was a stadium full of a few thousand people just going to the game for the novelty of it, along with an even smaller number of people who actually love the Yankees, or love yelling about the Yankees, I'm still not sure.

I'd compare the way the die-hard fans in attendance cheered for the Yankees to watching a group of elderly people in a nursing home huddled around a TV cheering for different people bidding on Storage Wars.

Baseball has so many games in a season that it is a sport that has figured out how to make each game nearly inconsequential to casual fans, but still all-important for the players, since there are so few playoff spots.

All in all, it is confirmed: baseball really isn't all it's cracked up to be. So, keep on following how Will Muschamp is implementing his system down in Auburn, and check out the NBA playoffs, maybe even show some support to the United States Women's National Team this summer as they play in the World Cup. But baseball, especially this time of year, is an easy thing to skip. Keep up the good work, Cullman; you've been doing sports right all along.

OPINION

TIME FOR AMERICANS TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Jared Keyel
PeaceVoice

The United States must accept responsibility for the damage its military actions have caused and recognize there are alternatives for the future.

In the nearly decade and a half since the September 11th, 2001 attacks, the United States has invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, carried out bombing campaigns throughout the Middle East, and launched special operations strikes throughout the world.

These policies are non-partisan. Many military actions begun under George W. Bush have continued and intensified under Barack Obama. The CIA-led drone wars in Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen are a key component of Mr. Obama's administration and the use of U.S. Special Forces has exploded in recent years, deploying to 134 countries in 2013.

The consequences of these actions are immense. In the words of 13-year-old Yemeni, Mohammed Tuaiman, U.S. drone strikes have "turned our area into hell and continuous horror, day and night, we even dream of them in our sleep." Mohammed, like his father and brother, was later killed by an American drone. Fourteen-year-old Zubair Ur Rehman, whose grandmother was killed by a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan, told five members of Congress in 2103,"I no longer love blue skies. In fact, I like gray skies; the drones cannot fly when the skies are gray."

Physicians for Social Responsibility, the American affiliate of Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War, recently released a report that estimates at least 1.3 million people have died as a result of the U.S. invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and the violent spillover into Pakistan. U.S. policies have not brought stability to countries such as Afghanistan or Yemen and as the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has shown, U.S. military actions have fanned the flames of terrorism, not extinguished them.

There is no doubt that many Americans believe our military interventions are undertaken to help others around the world. Unfortunately, the reality is far different. From Afghanistan to Libya, our military interventions have left broken lives and nations in ruins. It may be surprising to some Americans, but a 2013 Gallup poll of 65 countries saw the United States at the top of the list of greatest threats to world peace.

We as Americans need to take that perception seriously and accept responsibility for the enormous human suffering our wars and interventions have caused. Most Americans have a genuine desire to help and not hurt others around the world. We can work to alleviate the injury we have already caused by providing more support for emergency humanitarian aid and refugee protection and resettlement, more funding to allow the societies we have torn apart to rebuild themselves, and by engaged, multilateral, diplomacy to try to end ongoing violence.

We need to push our government, no matter which party is currently in power, to live up to our obligations under international law and end the pervasive use of military force. We have relied on military means too widely and too belligerently and it is time to chart a different course.

Jared Keyel has a background in International Relations and Middle Eastern Affairs and currently works with refugees, asylum-seekers, and immigrants in Chicago, Illinois and is syndicated through PeaceVoice.





SECOND ANNUAL TEAM CREW CHARITY DAY



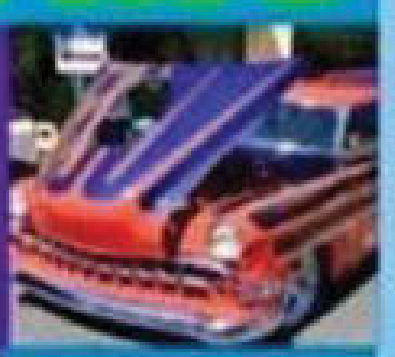
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